

This is KADATH, a journal of postal Diplomacy, carrying 1970BL, the Blistering Game, a game played by well-known players and analyzed by other well-known players. This is for the benefit of those who don't know what's going on, so they won't feel alone. Subscriptions are 10/\$1. This is Pandemonium Publication #297, edited and published by Rod Walker, 5058 Hawley Blvd., San Diego CA 92116; telephone (714) 282-1921; member, NFFGB Diplomacy Division, IFW Diplomacy Society, & the DA. JOIN THE DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION! We need cool heads and honest votes.

#6

7 April
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DIPLOGROK! The N3FGB Diplomacy Division proudly announces its sponsorship of a new Diplomacy 'zine. Our new genzine is edited by Gary Jones, 1070 Colgate, Memphis TN 38106. We hope to have articles, a letter column, possibly a rating system, and other things of interest to the general player. Issue #1 will be out in early May. Subscriptions are \$1.50. This will bring you at least 8 issues, and possibly more, depending on how much it actually costs to produce the 'zine. If you wish to order only issue #1, it will be 25¢. Write Mr. Jones for further details. He could also use contributions in the form of articles, letters, or whatnot on Diplomacy subjects, and he'd certainly appreciate your help.

1970BL -- OL' MAN TURKEY, HE JES' KEEPS ROLLIN' ALONG

Fall 1902:

AUSTRIA (vonMetzke): A Bud H, A Adu-Rom S by A Ven, F Adr-Ion. Owns: Bud, Tri, Vie, Ven (3). Remove 1.

ENGLAND (Cochran): F Nwy H, A Edi-Bel C by F Nth and S by F Eng. Owns: Edi, Lpl, Lon, Nwy, Bel (5). Build 1.

FRANCE (Peery): A Pic-Bel S by A Bur, A Mar S A Bur, A Gas-Bre S by F Mid. Owns: Bre, Mar, Par, Por, Spa (5). No change.

GERMANY (Nelson): A Ber-Kie, A Mun & A Den H, A Ruh & F Hol S ENGLISH A Edi-Bel. Owns: Ber, Kie, Mun, Den, Hol (5). No change.

ITALY (Lakofka): A Rom H S by A Tus, F Tyr-Nap. Owns: Nap, Rom, Tun (3). No change.

RUSSIA (Welsh): A Rum (R)-Gal (summer). A StP-Nwy, A Gal-Vie, A Ukr-Gal, F Swe-Nwy, F Sev H S by A Mos. Owns: Mos, StP, Sev, War, ~~Rum~~, Swe, Vie (6). No change.

TURKEY (Naus): F Con-Bla, F Aeg-Gre, F Arm-Sev S by A Rum, A Bul S A Rum. Owns: Ank, Con, Smy, Bul, Ser, Gre, Rum (7). Build 2.

With this issue, we begin a series of commentaries on the game by Brenton VerPloeg. Brenton is pretty good at bad-mouthing himself, and telling you how he doesn't really know very much, but don't believe it. It is impossible to play in a game very long with him before you realize what a firm grip he has on the subtleties of diplomacy. And as for analysis--well, if what follows doesn't blow a few lids, I don't know what will. Brenton has been an observer and player since 1966, and has the keen observation of a collegiate debater and a law student (both of which he has been and is). Combine this with a nicely acerbic style, and...

COMMENTARY . . . Brenton VerPloeg

When I spent the summer of 1969 in Chicago, I also had the opportunity, at his invitation, to spend several Saturdays with Allan Calhamer, testing out various of his game inventions. Invariably, the topic would turn to Diplomacy, and the discussions sometimes went on for hours. One of the things that he told me that will always stick in my mind was this: "Whenever you're watching a game, and you see some strange moves, don't be

surprised. There is almost always a diplomatic reason for it, no matter how much the players involved might deny it at the time." This game, I think, is a representation of Allan's statement on the grand strategy level. England/Germany get mixed up, and then apparently combine against France. Why? Did France hold off the strategic 2nd fleet to try to secure English help? Why didn't it work? What on earth is Germany planning? And isn't this the strangest game in the Balkans? EVER?

My ruminations on this game will be almost meaningless, as I have tried to tell Rod on many occasions. But here I am, so I think that I may as well begin this all with two general comments. Mr. Afast seems to be commenting well on the tactical situations that have been presented (and missed), so I will, in the future, try to examine the potential FUTURE PLANS of the countries in this game from a wholly strategic point of view. Note, please, that this means that I will not necessarily be commenting directly on the game itself. Frankly, I would hate to be in a game like that, for fear that the commentator's trivia might affect the game (hasn't it already?). We needn't relate things directly--witness Mr. Smythe's article. But for this time, I will. Subject: The "Southern California" coalition; or, How I learned to stop worrying and became downright paranoid.

Initially, let me say that I think the danger of a regional alliance of players is vastly over-stressed. When John [Beshara] mentioned it, I recalled my first game, in which I was surrounded by New Yorkers. The wonderful thing about Diplomacy is that it brings out the worst in all of us, and part of that implies that we don't need to worry too much about such things. Certainly, the New Yorkers didn't hesitate to axe each other. But this might be one of the things that makes 1970BL somewhat unique. It plays as IF there were a tripartite alliance amongst Naus, vonMetzke, and Peery. Or, perhaps more importantly, the other players might see it as such. Considered this way, a lot of things in this game that are otherwise inexplicable become sane: (1) Italy's attack against France, otherwise foolish at best, makes sense if he were trying to get at Peery for reason of fear at being between two San Diegans (more or less). (2) The equally perplexing Austrian attack against Italy follows directly (you'll not mess up MY ball game). (3) The strange nature of the Austro-Turkish alliance comes clean, as does: (4) Russia's reaction to it--taking the pressure off Italy, and not just inconsiderably getting himself another center. (5) If there had been indecision in the Northwest, England and Germany seem to have resolved it against, guess whom, another Southern Californian.

Frankly, this might all be BS. It's right off the top of my head. But if it's true, then that means that not only are the three players involved thinking in that way, but the others are too. Assuming that rather far-fetched concept is correct, then I am afraid that I don't consider Turkey the good bet that Mr. Afast does. He's the strongest by far right now, but Dippy games are decided at the end of the game, not in 1902. I think that his association with what might be the death-kissed group could prove his eventual undoing, though he will obviously finish strongly. Well, let's see how things work out. English tactics aren't the best, but assuming that the Russians are not trying to attack Norway (which would be insane and, incidentally, shoot my theory to shreds), they are my current favorites. Allan would have loved to comment on this game--he doesn't know what he missed.

[And Brenton sends me this side note after getting the S02 moves, which I forgot to send him when I sent SFW01 and F02:] Having now perused the